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(b) The Committee decided that it would be unwise on administrative grounds to combine the Medical and the Public Health departments under the headship of the Surgeon-General and, therefore, recommended that the present system should be maintained. The Government have accepted the recommendation of the Committee. The retrenchment suggested in the Industries department will be considered in due course.

Retrenchment in the Forest Department.

* 398 *Q.*—Mr. Basheer Ahmed Sayeed: Will the hon. the Member for Finance be pleased to state—

(a) whether the Government have considered the question of effecting retrenchment in the Forest Department and if so, on what lines;

(b) whether any recommendations as to the retrenchment in the Forest Department were placed before the Retrenchment Committee and if so, what they were; and

(c) what was the decision arrived at by the Retrenchment Committee?

A.—(a), (b) & (c) The expenditure of the Forest Department has not yet been examined in detail by the Retrenchment Committee. The only point that they have considered was the possibility of temporarily closing down the Forest College; and this they decided would be impracticable, as an immediate measure of economy. The Chief Conservator has, however, made comprehensive proposals for reduction of expenditure during the current year and surrenders of just under Rs. 3 lakhs have either been made or ordered by Government, chiefly by restricting the programme of timber extraction and cutting down capital expenditure on communications and buildings to the lowest possible figure. Further avenues of retrenchment will be explored by the Retrenchment Committee in due course.

Stoppage of recruitment to permanent service pending the question of the pay of future incumbents.

* 399 *Q.*—Mr. Basheer Ahmed Sayeed: Will the hon. the Member for Finance be pleased to state—

(a) whether the Government have considered the question of stopping all future appointments on a permanent basis pending the examination of the question of future pay and strength of public service;

(b) whether any recommendations have been made by the Retrenchment Officer or the Finance Committee in this behalf;

(c) if so, whether any orders have been issued by Government to heads of departments in this direction; and